LIBRARY COPY

THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—The Voice of the Silence

VOL. XV OCTOBER 1944 No. 10

GANDHIJI'S RELIGION

All this—whatever there is in this universe—is pervaded by Deity. Renounce all and enjoy. Do not covet the wealth of another.

—Ishopanishad

I suggest to you that the truth that is embedded in this very short *mantra* is calculated to satisfy the highest cravings of every human being—whether they have reference to this world or to the next. I have in my search of the scriptures of the world found nothing to add to this *mantra*....This *mantra* tells me that I cannot hold as mine anything that belongs to God.

—Gandhiji in *Harijan*, January 30, 1937.

The whole of India and his many many friends all over the world are celebrating the 75th Birthday of Gandhiji tomorrow—the second of October. We want to be among those who are saluting Gandhiji on his auspicious day and we wish him to possess in increasing degree the strength of the Soul on which the healthful life of the body depends and which exerts its own peculiar influence even in the death of the body.

THE ARYAN PATH, unconcerned with power and party politics, has always discussed the moral and mystical ideas and tendencies underlying Gandhiji's attitude to life and labour. Today we are reviewing the religious outlook of this highly religious man, who has profoundly influenced the religious life of the twentieth century.

The activities of Gandhiji are many; the village and the city, men and women, old and young, rich and poor, with their problems of body, mind or Spirit, belonging to this country of India, have all received attention from him. And further afield, India as a part of the world, affecting and affected by it, has not been overlooked. To understand the life and work of Gandhiji in a true way we must try to see the intimacy subsisting between his inner character and his outer conduct; between his personal life and his

public labour. As we ponder over this we find that in spite of some bifurcations and frustrations he has succeeded, in a unique measure, in bringing about a real harmony between these. He may well be described as a practising Advaitee or one who regards his own life and work as but an aspect of the One Life and his purpose as but an arc of the Great Purpose of the Universe—the Circle of Necessity.

This is the starting-point which will enable us best to perceive Gandhiji's outlook as an embodied Spirit. We all are embodied Spirits, but alas! possessing it, the Spirit is not heeded; It so little avails us. A man's true religion shows itself in his own inner attitude to his fellows and to Nature. The *Bhagavad-Gita* says that all men are shaped according to their *çraddhā* (heart-energy), faith; man is faith-formed; what his faith is, that verily is he (XVII. 3). A man's religion is not that of his bodily birth or outward denomination. If it were, the churches would be full of true Christians—but we know that they are not; good thoughts, words and deeds would flourish in the consciousness of every Parsi, but they do not; Hinduism would be free from the curse of untouchability if even a majority of Hindus accepted and lived up to the Teaching of their faith, One Impartite Self shining in every human heart, but alas! untouchability persists!

Most men have two religions: one, the inner, manifesting in daily life, in one's character, ideation and action; the other is the religion of the family into which the body is born. An honest mind, an earnest heart, a really sincere man soon acknowledges to himself that the routine of his life is not in harmony with his highest aspirations, the yearnings of his Soul; these Soul-yearnings and inner aspirations may or may not be wholly in conformity with the teachings of the religion into which his body was born. Thus, a Brahmana by bodily birth may or may not find himself in agreement with the Brahmana-Dharma expounded in Holy Writ or the Shastras. Nor are his hopes and ideals realisable through the ceremonialism of his outward religion—going to a temple, wearing the sacred thread, putting on a caste-mark, performing this and that ritual. The inner religion of such a "Brahmana" may be what is called Free-Thought, whether of the tamasic, the rajasic or the satvic variety. Unmindful of his inner cogitations, his silent hopes and aspirations, he might "live" his religion through the dead-letter performance of the prescribed ceremonies on the appointed dates whenever these cannot possibly be assigned to a hired priest, through the outward observance of all traditional rites, but what of his inner life? What connection has his professed religion with his inner *çraddhā* or faith?

The evolution of the human Soul is to be measured by the degree of integration of the different constituents which compose man. In the

unevolved Soul there is inner discord. The thoughts of his mind, the aspirations of his heart, the words on his lips and the millions of actions which result from these are in conflict. The resolving of this conflict so that the warring elements of his being are made to work in unison and harmony constitutes human progression. To integrate one's own self, to help others to do likewise, such is man's mission on earth.

In Gandhiji the inner and outer religions have become harmonised, not to perfection, as he himself has indicated, but in comparison with ordinary persons to a considerable extent. That is why to the people his life looks marvellous and his actions seem as if endowed with some magical quality. How he has achieved this is not difficult to comprehend; in fact, it is simple. What is difficult, nay, Herculean, is the application of what is perceived. Intellectual honesty, mental sincerity, is the requisite. That we all know. He has made applications of that principle of integration in his own living and in his own dealings with people, as all of us would like to do, while failing more often than not. It is not that we lack the perception to resolve righteously, or the will to achieve, but that possessing these we allow our desires to take us away from the task of application. "Behind Will stands Desire" says the ancient teaching. We must make all our personal desires lean towards and centre upon the Soul's desire. If that be strong enough our many desires will not take us away from the central task of life, *viz.*, integration of our own self and the helping of others to such integration. The stage any person has reached in his evolutionary progress can be known by examining dispassionately the quality and the measure of the integration achieved between his head and his heart, his lips and his hands.

Thus, Gandhiji's Hinduism is not a mere belief in the performance of so-called religious deeds in the outer life, but an inner faith rooted in his own understanding of what he has learnt of the religion of his own family and country. He was born of Vaishnava parents, but he says:—

> The Gandhis used to observe not only the Vaishnava but also the Shaivite vows, and visited the Vaishnava as also the Shaivite temples.
>
> —*My Experiments with Truth.* Vol. II, p. 183.

His Hinduism is not acceptable to the orthodox Hindus. Orthodox Hinduism of today, says Gandhiji, "has become moribund, inactive, irresponsive to growth." And why? "Because we are fatigued" (*Young India*, April 10, 1924). Orthodox Hinduism has become static due to this fatigue. To vitalise it back into life and make it dynamic a Hindu has to become heterodox along a constructive line and that is precisely what Gandhiji has done. He calls himself

> a lay humble student of Hinduism, and claiming to be one desirous of practising Hinduism in the spirit and to the letter...

and yet adds :—

Let us not deceive ourselves into the belief that everything that is written in Sanskrit and printed in Shastra has any binding effect upon us. That which is opposed to the fundamental maxims of morality, that which is opposed to trained reason, cannot be claimed as Shastra, no matter how ancient it may be.

—*Young India*, October 20, 1927.

So Gandhiji's religion is not dependent on any Shastra. His religion is a way of life and he but uses the Shastraic and other ideas to live his life whenever these ideas are not opposed to "the fundamental maxims of morality" and to "trained reason." Under what influence did Gandhiji evolve such views?

Gandhiji was directly influenced by the great spiritual forces which were streaming forth in the last quarter of the 19th century. The false concept of religion as a mere set of dogmas believed in by a certain number of people, large or small, was attacked and was being demolished. The very definition of religion underwent a revision, consequent upon the conception, also put forward and largely accepted, of Humanity as one and indivisible, superior to and more important than any nation or race. The human mind was being fecundated by the grand principle of Universal Brotherhood. It was pointed out that

The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church—the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter but penetrable by any one who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God.*

—*Isis Unveiled* (1877) by H. P. Blavatsky, Vol. II, p. 635.

And Religion was defined thus :—

A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se*, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and all *things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our Theosophical definition of religion.

—*Is Theosophy a Religion?* (1888) by H. P. Blavatsky.

This was not a new discovery, but the uncovering and the reiteration of the old forgotten truth, *e. g.*, of the *Mahābhārata* (*Karna-parva*):

That which supports, that which holds together the peoples, that is Dharma.

The ancient verities were coming into prominence again; the era of materialism was closing; the age of Spirit ascendancy was opening and among the comparatively few Gandhiji was directly touched by that current of spirituality. Under its liberalising influence he became a channel for affecting the mind of the race along his own lines. To him "Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after Truth" (*Young India*, April 10, 1924).

To Gandhiji life became "an aspiration. Its mission is to strive after perfection. which is self-realization" (*Harijan*, June 22, 1935). And so a very natural unfoldment of his native Vaishnavism and

Hinduism has been taking place. Under his fostering care has arisen not a new religion, but an expansion from within without of Vaishnavism and Hinduism, for he was not impervious to world-forces while holding fast to the old moorings. Born a Vaishnava, Gandhiji would bring within his spiritual fold a cow-killing and a beef-eating Westerner. Born a Hindu, he would not look upon any one as Mlechcha. He writes:—

> There is no one so fallen in this world but can be converted by love.
>
> —*Young India*, August 8, 1929.

> Indeed, Hinduism teaches us to regard the whole of humanity as one indivisible and undivided family and holds each one of us responsible for the misdeeds of all.
>
> —*Young India*, May 13, 1926.

So Gandhiji cannot be called a Hindu or a Vaishnavite in the ordinary sense. He may be compared to a tree whose roots are in the soil of Hinduism and Vaishnavism but whose foliage and fruitage are distinct and different. From the old soil the tree has grown, absorbing modern atmosphere, and under its shade millions are finding refuge from the oppressive heat of the twentieth-century civilisation.

Curious it is that this forward-moving heterodoxy which is such a marked feature in Gandhiji's life is not generally noticed. He is even regarded as going back to old Naturalism. This misunderstanding has one grave consequence—people do not follow Gandhiji's Religion while trying to follow that which flows from it, thus meeting with frustration and failure. The soul of Gandhiji's policy and programme is in his Religion; instruments and institutions (*e.g.*, the Charkha or the Harijan Sevak Sangh) are but vehicles through which some manifestation of the inner current takes place; and these vehicles become soulless, and their functions produce poor results, if used when the religious ideation and imagination hidden in them have not been touched, not been felt, let alone been absorbed. Thus, to many, plying the Charkha is boring or vegetarianism a mere fad because they have not perceived the soul in and of them.

How did this Religion of Living come into being in and through Gandhiji? He says that he became entirely absorbed in service of the community in South Africa because he felt that "God could be realised only through service" (*My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. I, p. 371). In clarifying his own mind so that he could deduce definite propositions for his Religion of Service he undertook a comparative study of religions. That study has not been abandoned, is still being pursued. Writing in 1937 on the subject of different religions he says:—

> But ultimately I came to the deliberate conviction that there was no such thing as only one true religion and every other false. There is no religion that is absolutely perfect. All are equally imperfect or more or less perfect.
>
> —*Harijan*, March 6, 1937.

Gandhiji sees Religion as a Tree and the many religions as branches on that one Tree. His own inner religion rejects without hesitation that which is not good in Hinduism and accepts that which is good in every creed. But who is to decide? Who is infallible enough to accept or reject this teaching or that idea pertaining to one religion or to another philosophy? Humility and confidence illumine these words of his:—

I claim to have no infallible guidance or inspiration. So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of pairs of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This, however, does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum-total of the experience of the sages of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come. Moreover there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental Truth, which is Truth itself, otherwise known as Non-violence. Finite human beings shall never know in its fulness Truth and Love, which is in itself infinite. But we do know enough for our guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is a self-governing being and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made.

—*Young India*, April 21, 1927.

In and through the service of humankind the True must be sought, and, when found, applied. And so we come upon another basic factor in Gandhiji's religion—Truth. This seeking he considers as true Bhakti.

Hence, in examining his religion, *i.e.*, his method of integrating the different elements of his being, we must look at Gandhiji's conception of God as Truth. Numerous are the Symbols and the Names given to Deity; and among these, certainly God as the True and Truth as God have been repeatedly used. But Gandhiji defines this term in his own distinctive way, calling Love and Non-violence its synonyms. Let him speak on this very important item of his religion:—

Generally speaking, observing the Law of Truth is merely understood to mean that we must speak the Truth. But we...understand the word Satya or Truth in a much wider sense.

—*From Yeravda Mandir*, pp. 2-3.

To find Truth completely is to realise oneself and one's destiny, *i. e.*, to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations.

—*Young India*, November 17, 1921.

The word "Satya" (Truth) is derived from "Sat" which means being.* And nothing is or exists in reality

* Philosophically "Being" is one of a pair; the other is "Non-Being." Deity must be above this pair and so it would be more appropriate and correct to say that Deity is "Be-ness."

except Truth. That is why "Sat" or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact, it is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or a general, names of God such as King of Kings or the Almighty are and will remain more usually current. On deeper thinking, however, it will be realised that "Sat" is the only correct and fully significant name for God.

And where there is Truth, there also is knowledge, pure knowledge. Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word "Chit" or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (Ananda). Sorrow has no place there. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as "Sat-chit-ananda," One who combines in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

—*From Yeravda Mandir*, pp. 1-2.

Now, it is this recognition and application of Truth which are considered by Gandhiji as the very first steps:—

Devotion to this Truth is the sole reason for our existence. All our activities should be centred in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. When once this stage in the pilgrim's progress is reached, all other rules of correct living will come without effort, and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without it, it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.

—*From Yeravda Mandir.*

Next to Service and Truth we come upon the factor of Non-violence; Ahimsa, Non-injury to others spells passivity and without its positive pole of Love does not become dynamic. Ahimsa must be regarded as one aspect of Deity, Satya, Truth, and Seva, Service, being the other two aspects. Just as the Hindu Trinity of Sat-Chit-Ananda or Brahma-Vishnu-Shiva is one and indivisible, so also Service, Truth and Love (Non-violence) form a triad; Gandhiji's God is the Trinity of Service which creates, Love which sustains and Truth which regenerates and these three in unison make up Satya-graha which is like Parabrahman, the Absolute.

To worship this Trinity, *i. e.*, to become worthy of relationship with Seva-Service, Truth-Satya and Love-Ahimsa, one has to have and to follow a Discipline of Life. If God within the Cave of the Heart is the Triad, its self-realisation and outer expression require practice, true Yoga, if we may use the term. Yoga is the Yoke of Asceticism which leads to Self-realisation or union with the Soul and it also enables us to show forth the Power (Shakti) of God in our daily life.

This Discipline of Yoga of the Gandhian ascetic is a fourfold one. The Triad of Service, Truth and Love requires a Quaternary for manifestation. This Quaternary Gandhiji has put forth as the Square of Swaraj. In *Harijan* of January 2, 1937, he speaks of "Ramraj, *i. e.*, the sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority"—and that can be realised by the nation only if a fourfold Self-reliance is practised.

Swa-raj, Self-rule, means the Triad of the Soul, the God within, the Inner Ruler, has become the Master of life and of all possessions of life. Life in Matter means a life of possessions and these are (1) Political, (2) Economic, (3) Social and (4) Spiritual. Writes Gandhiji :—

Let there be no mistake about my conception of Swaraj. It is complete independence of alien control and complete economic independence. So at one end you have political independence, at the other the economic. It has two other ends. One of them is moral and social, the corresponding end is Dharma, *i. e.*, religion in the highest sense of the term. It includes Hinduism, Islam, Christianity etc., but is superior to them all. You may recognize it by the name of Truth, not the honesty of expedience but the living Truth that pervades everything and will survive all destruction and all transformation. Moral and social uplift may be recognized by the term we are used to, *i. e.*, non-violence. Let us call this the square of Swaraj which will be out of shape if any of its angles s untrue. In the language of the Congress we cannot achieve this political and economic freedom without truth and non-violence, in concrete terms, without a living faith in God and hence moral and social elevation.

By political independence I do not mean an imitation of the British House of Commons, or the Soviet rule of Russia or the Fascist rule of Italy or the Nazi rule of Germany. They have systems suited to their genius. We must have ours suited to ours. What that can be is more than I can tell. I have described it as Ramraj, *i. e.*, sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. The Congress constitutions of Nagpur and Bombay for which I am mainly responsible are an attempt to achieve this type of Swaraj.

Then take economic independence. It is not a product of industrialization of the modern or the Western type. Indian economic independence means to me the economic uplift of every individual male and female by his or her own conscious effort. Under that system all men and women will have enough clothing—not mere loin cloth, but what we understand by the term necessary articles of clothing—and enough food including milk and butter which are today denied to millions.

This brings me to socialism. Real socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors who taught, "All land belongs to Gopal, where then is the boundary line ? Man is the maker of that line and he can therefore unmake it." Gopal literally means shepherd ; it also means God. In modern language it means the State, *i. e.*, the people. That the land today does not belong to the people is too true. But the fault is not in the teaching. It is in us who have not lived up to it.

I have no doubt that we can make as good an approach to it as is possible for any nation, not excluding Russia, and that without violence. The most effective substitute for violent dispossession is the wheel with all its implications. Land and all property is his who will work it. Unfortunately the workers are or have been kept ignorant of this simple fact.

—*Harijan*, January 2, 1937.

One more factor in Gandhiji's Religion must be borne in mind—service of Humanity as a whole.

My religion has no geographical

limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself.

—*Young India*, August 11, 1920.

I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually and those who surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*, I believe in the essential unity of man and, for that matter, of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him, and if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent.

—*Young India*, December 4, 1924.

If by service of and in the village Gandhiji is trying to free India, so by service of the Motherland is he endeavouring to liberate our civilisation fettered by militarism, industrialism and materialism. The Soul of the world needs a vehicle of expression and it can only be created by men and women who carry the Tathagata Light within their hearts. May that Light illuminate and guide the steps of an ever increasing number throughout the world!

"ACCORDING TO HIS WORK"

WHAT IS IMPLICIT IN THE SPINNING-WHEEL?

[**Shrimati Lila Ray** describes her excellent study on the mystical aspect of work and the circle of routine, which creates satisfaction in the psyche of man and makes bodily fatigue healthy as "an attempt to explain what Gandhiji's spinning-wheel symbolizes for me. I think the spinning-wheel is still the least understood part of his programme." We consider this an appropriate occasion to print her essay along with our Editorial.—ED.]

What is a human being worth? To those who love him he is worth more than his weight in gold; to his employer he is worth the work that can be got out of him; to society he is worth the service he gives it; to humanity he is worth what he adds to the wealth of the race. Is worth then relative? It would seem so, yet each of us is convinced of his own inherent worth as a living creature and a human being. When that conviction is lost life becomes intolerable. Each man's worth to himself is absolute, and his potential worth is greater than his actual one. A good motto for any new experiment in the perfecting of the human condition is "Value others as yourself." For upon the manner in which the question of a man's worth is answered depends the manner in which the whole of human life is organised.

How to determine this inherent worth a man feels himself to possess? We can get an idea of it from the way in which it is indirectly acknowledged. Surely each of us is worth his keep? Otherwise would not the

insane, the invalid, the very old, and all who for one reason or another are useless alike to society, employers, humanity and even family be killed off instead of provided for? Why does the human heart revolt at the idea of putting them away altogether? A person *is* worth at least his keep irrespective of whether he can work, is a burden or a bearer of burdens, serves or is served. Says Shakespeare :—

For naught so vile that on earth doth live,
But to the earth some special good doth give.

This is the Magna Carta of living things. They are entitled to live for the special good that is theirs to bestow on the earth, no matter how obscure that good may be. Being entitled to live they are entitled to their livelihood. This accords ill with the Darwinian doctrine of the survival of the fittest. No one will deny that all animals and, in their own way, plants, struggle for their existence, that is, fight for their lives. What is overlooked is that they do not struggle for their livelihood. The things they feed upon are provided by their habitat and their need of raiment too is anticipated by nature. Is this not what Christ meant when he said, "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.... And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: Yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." And when he told us not to take thought for food and clothing for "the heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" was he not in so many words proclaiming that these belong to man by the intrinsic and inalienable right of a living being? Yet, man does not find all he needs ready to his use as do other living things. He cannot put his lips to the earth and suck up his sustenance as can the lily nor can he feed as fowls of the air. He shares with them the need, use and enjoyment of light, water, air, virgin soil, and natural beauty. But for clothing and most of his food he has to busy himself more than the bee, labour more unremittingly than the ant. It is as though nature, in bestowing upon man a fraction of her own superb creative power, withdrew from him at the same time several natural advantages in justice to other creatures, choosing to deny him those things the absence of which would best help him develop his new power.

No man alone can do all that is necessary to secure himself clothing and food. Even in the most favourable circumstances he is not long in discovering that two heads are better than one. Working together men have been mutually dependent upon each other for their livelihood from the start. Not all the gadgets of their machine-proud civilisation have been able to free them from this dependence. The opposite has

been the case. The dependence of man upon men has grown. This common dependence gives rise to moral relationships. Morality takes us back to religion. Therefore did Christ add: "...Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you." This is, take thought not for food and clothing but for the justness and uprightness of your dealings with men, for upon them do you depend for the wherewithal to live. This dependence is inseparable from man's humanity. The various forms the relationshps arising out of it take are called societies. The *raison d'être* of a society is to secure their livelihood to its members. When for any reason it fails of this purpose the society disintegrates and another replaces it.

What do we mean by livelihood? Surely at least sufficient food to keep the body in health, sufficient clothing to protect it as well as his fur protects the tiger, and lodging as adequate to the rearing of the human young as his den for the rearing of the lion's cubs? Yet how many people in the world have these today? How many in India?

It will not then be overestimating the worth of a man to assume that he is worth his keep. Let us take it as his irreducible primal right, his basic value. He adds to it to the degree he loves and is loved, works, serves and contributes to the human store. His ability to do these things gives him an additional right, the right to what will enable him to develop this ability to the full, for only so can he become of the greatest possible worth to himself and others. His worth, over and above his basic worth, is relative, being in direct proportion to the development of his abilities. Obviously it is in the interest not only of the man himself but of those who employ him, of society, and of humanity to provide what his development requires. This was what Marcus Aurelius meant when he wrote: "...Thou wilt observe this also as a general truth, if thou dost observe, that whatever is profitable to any man is profitable also to other men."

A great deal is said about what is called the cheapness of human life and labour in Asia generally and India in particular. Human life is not, and can never be, cheap. That any man or woman may be compelled by circumstances to work for a fraction of his or her livelihood does not mean that he or she is worth so little. It means only that they are not given their due. Human life can be undervalued, human labour underpaid. It is well to remember the expression "cheapness of human life and labour" came into use only after the exploitation of Asia had begun. Too many of Europe's proud cities are paved with wealth stolen from the human race. To walk their streets is to walk over the bones of millions of human beings, Occidental and Oriental, whose worth has been denied them and the wealth wrought by their

labour stolen. If what profits one profits all, has not the profit of the exploiter benefited humanity? Some one will immediately put this question. The answer is no. Theft profits no one, neither the person stolen from nor the person who steals. The one dies directly or indirectly of starvation or diseases bred of starvation, the other dies morally and diseases such as war, bred of an atrophying morality, sooner or later complete the work. What profits no one, profits none.

The ability to add to his own worth is the most important thing about a human being from any stand-point. How does he do it? He acquires skill, sureness, strength and speed; he acquires knowledge, understanding, wisdom; he becomes a man in the fullest sense of that word. How does he acquire these? By loving, by working with hand and head, by serving.

A person takes a broom and sweeps a dirty floor. What was foul becomes fair. He takes cotton and spins thread. The cotton becomes something it was not. He takes a lump of earth and fashions it into a graceful water vessel. The earth has taken on a new use and beauty. The same phenomenon takes place when he smelts ore into metal, chisels stone into a statue, builds a dwelling, hollows a tree and floats it, fits words together to make an idea, polishes shoes or cooks a dinner. The state of the thing upon which he works is changed; it acquires new uses, beauties, values. "In the process of production," writes Marx, "man can only work as nature works—by changing the forms of matter. Nay more, in this work of changing the forms of matter he is continually aided by the forces of nature." As a result of this change the value of the thing worked upon is enhanced. Work produces worth. This worth is greater or less according as man's skill, sureness, strength and speed are greater or less. These grow through the work itself. But less skill and strength are needed to sweep a room clean or polish shoes well than to smelt ore, build houses or express ideas. Yet all work will be seen to have one thing in common, its creativeness. And that creativeness is twofold. Marx goes on to say, "By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he (man) at the same time changes his own nature. He develops the potentialities that slumber within him and subjects these inner forces to his own control." Man's ability to work is a creative ability twofold in its effect, enhancing at one and the same time the worth of the worker and the worth of his work. As with a man's work so with his love. The better able he is to love the more apt he is to be loved. The creative power of love, though perhaps less tangible, is certainly not less than the creative power of labour. And if a man loves and works to the fullest of his powers society and humanity will be simultaneously served.

To arrive at a correct conception of the character of man's work its double action must be studied more closely. The great stress laid on physical hygiene in recent years has succeeded in making the physical needs of the worker at least known. His psychical needs are very far from being realised or acknowledged. Fatigue in the worker has sufficiently hampered production and caused the industrialist enough loss to stimulate him to an effort to reduce and if possible eliminate its evil effects in the interest of efficiency. Of the inquiry into the nature of fatigue a new science, Industrial Psychology, has been born. Fatigue is important for, as we will see, it is one of the more obvious symptoms of maladjustment between the worker and his work. The research into its causes promises to give us eventually the psychic hygiene contemplated by Dr. Maria Montessori. But the angle of approach must be the human being's, not the industrialist's.

Man develops through the dual exercise of his psychical and physical powers. They are as inseparable as heat from the body. To try to dissociate them as is done in modern industrialism is to kill the man. Marx, in speaking of the high mortality of labour, quotes from a speech made by Ferrand in the House of Commons, April 27, 1863. Ferrand said: "The cotton trade has existed for three generations of the English race and I believe I may safely say that during that period it has destroyed nine generations of factory operatives."

When we speak of man's livelihood therefore we mean more than the bare physical necessities, important though these are. And one of the things a man must have to live is work, and he must work as nature works, his work being as natural a function of his spirit as digestion of his body. What, then, is this work? It is a process, a dynamic procedure which results in a material product on the one hand and an immaterial "product" on the other. Let us consider the spinning of cotton into thread by hand, analysing it at first materially, then psychically. Let us assume for convenience that the cotton is already ginned. It must now be carded, rolled into slivers, spun, reeled off the spindle on to a winder and made into hanks. We have five phases of a material process the product of which is thread. What is its psychic counterpart? There is a preliminary phase of preparation for the main task. Easy subsidiary operations are performed, materials got ready, cotton is carded and rolled, the wheel set in order. Then the phase of serious work begins, the effort of the worker culminating in the actual spinning which in itself is more complex than the other phases, consisting of three operations, the drawing, twisting and taking up of the thread on the spindle. This phase is intense and prolonged. The pitch of attention is high and sustained though the intensity of the worker's concentration rises and falls with a variation as

steady and regular as that of a musical sound wave. It is at its peak when the thread is being drawn, at ebb when the thread is being taken up on the spindle or reeled off and made into hanks. When the worker's maximum effort has spent itself a period of rest sets in. There is a slackening off, the remaining tasks are completed, implements cleaned and thread put away. This is all done with a thoughtful, contemplative air. The worker is serene, quiet, happy, examining the results of his own and others' labour. It is at this time, Dr. Montessori tells us, that man has most need of time "to stand and stare," that his powers of contemplation are keenest, and the mind takes off on those mysterious flights which widen and deepen his understanding, give his vision of life perspective, and lift him to a higher rung of being. An internal cycle of work has been completed and it has its counterpart in the completion of an external process. It is only from such a cycle of activity, an internal process regularly and completely carried out, by means of a corresponding external one, and the methodical concentration work with an intelligent object entails that the worker acquires steadiness, skill, precision, patience, elasticity, and the power to do something more difficult the next time. Only after such work does the worker feel refreshed, happy, satisfied and strong with the sense of something good gained. Whether the process take years or a day is immaterial, depending on the kind of work undertaken.

What happens when such a process is broken up or interfered with, as is usual in large-scale industry? A worker is kept engaged the whole of his working time with only one phase of a work, a partial function, such as rolling slivers. He is not allowed to go on to the next phase or complete the process. That is done by others whose labour also in its turn is confined to a single phase or sub-phase of the work in progress. This sort of division of labour came into existence about the middle of the sixteenth century in Europe with the rise of manufacture and is still the dominant form of the capitalist process of production. Let Marx answer our question: "Whereas simple cooperation leaves the individual's methods of work substantially unaltered, manufacture revolutionizes these methods and cuts at the root of individual labour power. It transforms the worker into a cripple, a monster, by forcing him to develop some highly specialised dexterity at the cost of a world of productive impulses and faculties—much as in Argentine they slaughter a whole beast simply in order to get its hide and tallow. Not merely are the various partial operations allotted to different individuals, but the individual himself is split up, is transformed into an automatic motor of some partial operation. Thus is realised the foolish fable of Menenius Agrippa which depicted the human being as nothing more than a fragment of his own body."

He goes on to say: "The independent peasant or handicraftsman develops knowledge, insight, will, even though it be only to a moderate extent....Under the manufacturing system these faculties are needed only by the workshop as a whole. Intelligence in production is amplified in one direction because it disappears in numerous directions." This crippling of the worker is completed in large-scale industry which detaches science from labour as manufacture detached the intellectual from the manual powers, making both science and intellect into oppressive tools of exploiting capital.

The worker's connection with the larger mechanism of the factory compels him to work with the regularity of a machine, to be, as it were, a living tool of a machine. The pace and intensity of his work is set for him by the mechanism he serves. It is steady and unrelenting from the moment he starts to the moment he stops and in its starting and stopping he has no say. No easy and natural ebb and flow in his effort is possible and the slightest relaxation on his part too frequently carries the threat of horrible mutilation or horrible death. For hours on end he is compelled to a strained and fixed attention. There are no "phases," all is one blur of tense effort. So he loses absolutely all freedom of function even on a detailed operation.

And he loses his freedom of movement also. Writes Marx: "The handicraftsman who carries out one after another the various detail processes that are needed in the making of a finished product, must from time to time change his place and change his tools. The transition from one operation to another interrupts the flow of his work, making, as it were, gaps in his working day. The gaps close up when the worker performs one and the same operation continuously throughout the working day; or they are reduced in proportion as the changes become less frequent...persistent labour of a uniform kind impairs the intensity and vigour of a man's animal spirits, which find refreshment and stimulus through change of activities."

The value of his labouring power inevitably declines. And the value of man declines with it. It is true much improvement has been made in Russia and elsewhere, but the fundamental problem, as I hope to show, remains untouched and but dimly realised. Otherwise H. G. Wells would not find himself compelled to admit in 1944 that: "Man in his Dawn, though maybe an ignorant being, was certainly not so collectively maladjusted as the man of our time. The *average* contemporary man *en masse* is definitely a degenerate creature, in the sense that he presents no collective resistance in the face of change." Nor would the recrudescence of cruelty puzzle him. His "man" is of course Atlantic man. Asia's very backwardness has been her salvation.

So the worker, deprived of all opportunity for progressive development, freedom of function and move-

ment, loses also his adaptability, his power to offer resistance to change, his power to do anything but the partial operation he has been assigned to. Because he loses these things individually, he loses them collectively. When he is thrown out of employment he finds himself helpless, without the resources that would enable him to find alternative work or a new way of life. He sinks to the level of unskilled labour and slowly becomes extinct. "Unhappily for the progress of the science of Political Economy," writes Ruskin in *Unto This Last*, "the plus quantities, or—if I may be allowed to coin an awkward plural—the pluses, make a very positive and venerable appearance in the world, so that every one is eager to learn the science which produces results so magnificent; whereas the minuses have, on the other hand, a tendency to retire into back streets and other places of shade, —or even to get themselves wholly and finally put out of sight in graves: which renders the algebra of this science peculiar, and difficultly legible: a large number of its negative signs being written by the account-keeper in a kind of red in which starvation thins, and mak strangely pale, or even quite invi ble ink, for the present."

To interrupt or vivisect the norm growth of mind through a correspon ing physical process by subdividi a work process is to interfere wi its vital functions. It reacts as pai fully as any other living organism Its orderly development thwarted, loses the stability that comes wi uninterrupted growth. The mor being decomposes. Hearts die, Shelley found to his distress tha they could. Man becomes irritab and restless, discontented, a sense frustration growing into bitterne and cynicism. He becomes vindic tive and is easily led into disorderl ness and violence. Something gone from within him and he diml perceives that something to be hi manhood, his humanity. Work be comes joyless and exhausting toi His physical resistance is lowered moral deterioration and disease mak rapid strides. Industrial patholog puts in an appearance, followed b "uplift" movements.

LILA RA

Printed and published by Kishansingh Chavda at Sadhana Press, Raopura, Baroda.
Edited by Sophia Wadia, "Aryasangha," Malabar Hill, Bombay 6, India.